V. REMARKS

Entry of the Amendment is proper under 37 C.F.R. §1.116 because the Amendment: a) places the application in condition for allowance for the reasons discussed herein; b) does not raise any new issue requiring further search and/or consideration because the Amendment amplifies issues previously discussed throughout prosecution; and c) places the application in better form for appeal, should an Appeal be necessary. The Amendment is necessary and was not earlier presented because it is made in response to arguments raised in the final rejection. The amendments to the subject claims do not incorporate any new subject matter into the claims. Thus, entry of the Amendment is respectfully requested.

Claim 17 is objected to because of an informality. The claim is amended to obviate the objection. Withdrawal of the objection is respectfully requested.

Claims 17-23 are rejected under 35 USC 103 (a) as being unpatentable over Nishikawa (JP Publication No. 2000-300729) in view of Ishida (JP Publication No. 09-253271). The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Nishikawa teaches a slot machine that enables a player to easily discriminate relevant patterns in the event of winning. A display device displays a plurality of patterns aligned in a matrix. The display device is a liquid crystal panel and each pattern can be seen through the liquid crystal panel. Upon winning, areas opposed to the patterns that form the prize winning patterns are colored translucent or opaque. The patterns unrelated to the prize winning patterns are therefore placed in obscurity or are invisible thereby clearly indicating only the patterns related to the prize winning patterns.

Ishida discloses a slot machine with stop switches. Actuation of a start switch starts varying the display of pattern display parts. A still-pattern deciding device selects random numbers and decides that combination of still pattern which can be displayed in still at any prize line of each pattern display part. A validation order

selecting device selects either a first order memory table or a second order memory table according to the decided combination. Either the first order memory table or the second order memory table validates each stop switch and then corresponding indication lamps are switched ON. A player actuates the validated stop switches and the pattern varying display of the pattern display parts are stopped. The indication lamps are then switched OFF.

Claim 17, as amended, is directed to a gaming machine that includes a plurality of variable display devices configured to variably display various symbols in response to a start operation; a stop control device configured to perform stop control of the plurality of variable display devices in response to a stop operation via a plurality of stop buttons, each of the stop buttons corresponding to each of the plurality of variable display devices; a lottery device configured to execute a lottery of a prize-winning combination and selecting one stop order from a plurality of stop orders in a stop order table; a lottery outcome device configured to enter a selected stop order associated with the prize-winning combination; a determining device configured to determine whether or not the order of the stop control has been performed in the correct order; a shielding device configure to shield the plurality of variable display devices, the shielding device being disposed in front of the variable display devices; and an attraction display device configured to display an attraction image among predetermined attraction images with the attraction display device being disposed in front of the shielding device.

Claim 17 recites that the shielding device shields other variable display devices other than one variable display device to be firstly stopped, and the attraction display device displays one attraction image. Further. claim 17 recites that, when the determining device determines that the order of the stop control has been performed in the correct order, the shielding device shields other variable display devices other than another display device to be subsequently stopped and the attraction display device displays another attraction image, and, when the determining device determines that the order of the stop control has not been performed in the correct

order, the shielding device shields the entirety of the variable display devices, and the attraction display device displays an erroneous attraction image notifying a player that the order of the stop control has not been performed in the correct order as selected from the stop order table by the lottery device.

It is respectfully submitted that none of the applied art, alone or in combination, teaches or suggests the features of claim 17 as amended. Specifically, it is respectfully submitted that the applied art, alone or in combination, fails to teach or suggest that when the determining device determines that the order of the stop control has not been performed in the correct order, the shielding device shields the entirety of the variable display devices and the attraction display device displays an erroneous attraction image notifying a player that the order of the stop control has not been performed in the correct order as selected from the stop order table by the lottery device. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that one of ordinary skill in the art could not combine the features of the applied art to arrive at the claimed invention because the applied art is devoid of all the features of the claimed invention. As a result, it is respectfully submitted that claim 17 is allowable over the applied art.

Claim 23, as amended, is directed to a gaming machine controller for controlling a gaming machine that includes a plurality of variable display devices and an attraction display device. Claim 23 recites that the gaming machine controller includes (a) a device for displaying various symbols on the plurality of variable display devices, in response to a start operation; (b) a device for performing stop control of the plurality of variable display devices, in response to a stop operation; (c) a device for executing a lottery of a prize-winning combination and executing one of the entries of a stop order table; (d) a device for designating a correct order associated with the prize-winning combination, in accordance with the entry from the stop order table; (e) a device for determining whether the order of the stop control has been performed in the correct order; (f) a device for shielding the plurality of variable display devices; and (g) a device for displaying an attraction image among predetermined attraction images on the attraction display device.

Claim 23 further recites that, when the device for determining whether the order of the stop control has been performed in the correct order determines that the order of the stop control has been performed in the correct order, other variable display devices other than one variable display device to be firstly stopped is shielded by the device for shielding the plurality of variable display devices and a first attraction image is displayed on the device for displaying the attraction image in accordance with the designation of the correct order, and subsequently other variable display devices other than one display device to be subsequently stopped is shielded by the device for shielding the plurality of variable display devices and a second attraction image is displayed by the device for displaying the attraction image in accordance with the determination that the order of the stop control has been performed in the correct order. Also claim 23 recites that, when the determining device determines that the order of the stop control has not been performed in the correct order, the entirety of the variable display devices are shielded by the device for shielding the plurality of variable display devices and a third attraction image is displayed on the device for displaying an attraction image notifying a player that the order of the stop control has not been performed in the correct order as designated by the device for designating the correct order associated with the prize-winning combination.

It is respectfully submitted that none of the applied art, alone or in combination, teaches or suggests the features of claim 23 as amended. Specifically, it is respectfully submitted that the applied art, alone or in combination, fails to teach or suggest that, when the determining device determines that the order of the stop control has not been performed in the correct order, the entirety of the variable display devices are shielded by the device for shielding the plurality of variable display devices and a third attraction image is displayed on the device for displaying an attraction image notifying a player that the order of the stop control has not been performed in the correct order as designated by the device for designating the correct order associated with the prize-winning combination. Thus, it is respectfully

submitted that one of ordinary skill in the art could not combine the features of the applied art to arrive at the claimed invention because the applied art is devoid of all the features of the claimed invention. As a result, it is respectfully submitted that claim 1 is allowable over the applied art.

In addition, Nishikawa does not disclose a light source for the liquid crystal panel. Accordingly, it is assumed that the light source is a natural light illuminated in front of the liquid crystal panel. On the contrary, the gaming machine according to the present invention is provided with cold cathode-ray tubes as light sources, provided at the inner surface side of the panel display device. Display information on the liquid crystal is more clearly viewed with the cold cathode-ray tube provided at the lower part. On the other hand, the cold cathode-ray tube provided at the upper part illuminates symbols painted on reels and functions as a backlight for the liquid crystal, thereby allowing display information on the liquid crystal to be more clearly viewed.

Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that the present invention is unobviousness over the combination of Nishikawa and Ishida, with the configuration of cold cathode-ray tubes as described above.

Claims 18-21 depend from claim 17 and include all of the features of claim 17. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that the dependent claims are allowable at least for the reason claim 17 is allowable as well as for the features they recite.

Withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Further, Applicants assert that there are also reasons other than those set forth above why the pending claims are patentable. Applicants hereby reserve the right to submit those other reasons and to argue for the patentability of claims not explicitly addressed herein in future papers.

In view of the foregoing, reconsideration of the application and allowance of the pending claims are respectfully requested. Should the Examiner believe anything further is desirable in order to place the application in even better condition for

allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' representative at the telephone number listed below.

Should additional fees be necessary in connection with the filing of this paper or if a Petition for Extension of Time is required for timely acceptance of the same, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge Deposit Account No. 18-0013 for any such fees and Applicant(s) hereby petition for such extension of time.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: July 14, 2008 By: _____
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